



CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF



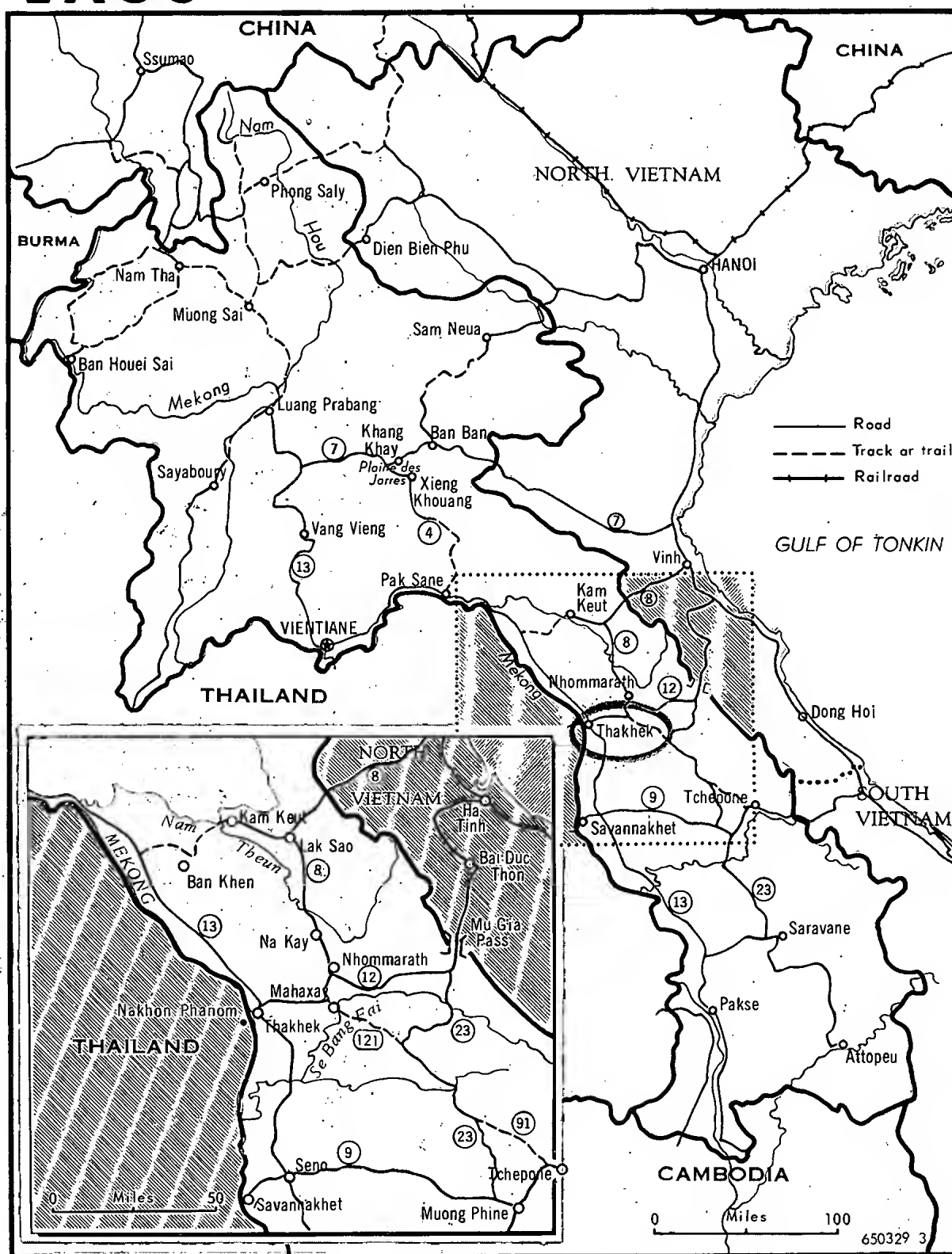
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30 MARCH 1965

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DAILY BRIEF
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1. Vietnam

The Communist "Liberation Radio" has acknowledged that the bombing of the US Embassy in Saigon was the work of the Viet Cong. The broadcast at noon today called the bombing a "very great exploit of the armed forces" in response to a central committee directive.

Hanoi radio proclaimed today that if the US commits "further crimes" against the North, it will meet "increasingly painful" results.

A curious incident near Saigon suggests that the Viet Cong are trying to counter any uplift to local morale springing from the air strikes to the north. Viet Cong personnel stopped a bus recently and lectured the passengers to the effect that the air strikes have been ineffective.

Other than the bombing in Saigon, no major Viet Cong actions have been reported. However, small-scale terrorism, sabotage, and harassment continue in the countryside.

No political developments of importance have been reported in the past twenty-four hours. Coup rumors circulating in the past few days still seem to have no substance.

So far, there is nothing to suggest that the impending transfer of Soviet Ambassador Chervonenko from Peiping to Prague reported in the press is other than routine. It is true, however, that the Chinese have given Chervonenko a rough ride lately on the Vietnam problem and other sticky issues.

Peiping and Hanoi continue to raise the possibility that volunteers, as well as arms, may be sent to South Vietnam. So far, however, they have not actually committed themselves to any new levels of involvement. Further analytical comment is at Annex.

2. Cyprus

All Greek Air Force personnel detailed for training on the Soviet surface-to-air missile have been recalled from Cyprus to Greece [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]. None of these people had gone on to Egypt, where the actual training was to have been administered.

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3. Laos

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Thakhek has now been recovered, and the rebellion seems to be contained.

Meanwhile, Ambassador Sullivan says it would take only one or two more "monkey shines" by Phoumi to cause serious friction between Bangkok and Vientiane. Efforts continue to get Phoumi and his cohort, Siho, out of Thailand.

4. Saudi Arabia

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5. USSR

The Soviet-Turkish rapprochement appears to be continuing despite the recent furor over Soviet arms aid to the Greek Cypriots.

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Last week a Turkish delegation in Moscow completed a deal that will significantly expand trade between the two countries during 1965-66. Soviet diplomacy has apparently skillfully exploited the appeal of a joint opposition to enosis.

6. USSR

The Brief of 29 January reported the discovery in satellite photography of extensive trench networks at a strategic point on both sides of the Sino-Soviet border. Re-examination of earlier photography now suggests that those trenches may have been built as early as World War II. Close examination of gun emplacements on the Soviet side indicates they are empty.

7. UAR

The Egyptians are in a serious bind with respect to wheat and other foodstuffs. Deputy Premier for Economy Quaysuni says that they have only one month's stock of wheat available. He told Ambassador Battle that Egypt would be "quite interested" in buying from the US provided the price was right and credit terms "reasonable."

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ANNEX

Volunteers for Vietnam

Talk of "volunteers" to aid the South Vietnamese "people" continues. This talk was given further prominence by Chinese Foreign Minister Chen I's 28 March message to the DRV foreign minister, which stated that the Chinese people will exert every effort to send the South Vietnamese people "the necessary material aid, including arms and all other war material, and stand ready to dispatch their men to fight shoulder to shoulder with the South Vietnamese people whenever the latter so require." This warning was picked up in a People's Daily editorial on 29 March, which asserted that following the US "occupation" of South Vietnam and "aggression" against North Vietnam, "its next step will be aggression against China."

The NLF, Hanoi, and the Chinese Communists are apparently trying to boost the morale of Communist forces in South Vietnam. More importantly, they are trying to raise the spectre of general war on the Indochinese mainland in order to increase the diplomatic and political pressure on the US and to deter the US from continuing, and perhaps increasing, its present policy line.

These statements do not appear to signal any overt infusion of North Vietnamese or, especially, Chinese strength into the war in South Vietnam though there may be some increase in North Vietnamese support to the Viet Cong. As the Communists must certainly realize--indeed Peiping is almost certainly counting heavily on just this--current Chinese and Vietnamese statements raise recollections of Korea in the fall of 1950. Actually, the Korean situation of a decade and a half ago and the present situation in Vietnam differ in many material aspects. In Korea, US forces had either actually reached or were rapidly advancing towards the very borders of China itself, and all indigenous (i.e., North Korean) opposition to such US advances had been virtually eliminated. No comparable situation exists in Vietnam, north or south, at the present time. Peiping and Hanoi almost certainly intend to play heavily on US and free world fears of another Korea, but the chances of the Communists' responding in Vietnam within the near future as they responded in Korea in 1950 now appear considerably less than even.

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